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VOICES
FROM
THE CROWD.

BY
CHARLES MACKAY,

AUTHOR OF
"UNDER GREEN LEAVES," "LUMP OF GOLD," ETC. ETC.

LONDON:
GEO. ROUTLEDGE & CO., FARRINGTON ST.,
NEW YORK.—15, BEEKMAN STREET.

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VOICES FROM THE CROWD,

AND

TOWN LYRICS.

BY

CHARLES MACKAY,

AUTHOR OF "EGERIA," "THE LUMP OF GOLD,"

ETC. ETC.

Fifth and Revised Edition.

LONDON:

G. ROUTLEDGE & CO. FARRINGDON STREET;

NEW YORK: 18, BEEKMAN STREET.

1857.

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PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

THE series of short Poems entitled "Voices from the Crowd," were for the most part written in the year 1845 and in the early part of 1846, a time of social and political agitation. The Corn Laws were unrepealed ; and the late lamented Sir Robert Peel had not announced the downfall of the old protective system. Many of them were intended to aid—as far as verses could aid—the efforts of the zealous and able men who were endeavouring to create a public opinion in favour of untaxed food, and of free trade and free intercourse among the nations. They were written as plainly as possible, that they might express the general sentiment of the toiling classes in phraseology broad, simple, and intelligible as the occasion. To the present edition,

the fifth which has been called for by the favour of the public, has been added the greater portion of another series, published three years later, under the title of "Town Lyrics."

LONDON, *August*, 1857.



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Voices from the Crowd.

THE WATCHER ON THE TOWER.

"WHAT dost thou see, lone watcher on the tower?
Is the day breaking? comes the wish'd-for hour?
Tell us the signs, and stretch abroad thy hand
If the bright morning dawns upon the land."

"The stars are clear above me, scarcely one
Has dimm'd its rays in reverence to the sun;
But yet I see, on the horizon's verge,
Some fair, faint streaks, as if the light would surge."

"Look forth again, O watcher on the tower—
The people wake, and languish for the hour;
Long have they dwelt in darkness, and they pine
For the full daylight which they know must shine."

"I see not well—the morn is cloudy still.—
There is a radiance on the distant hill;
Even as I watch the glory seems to grow;
But the stars blink, and the night breezes blow."

"And is that all, O watcher on the tower?
Look forth again; it must be near the hour.
Dost thou not see the snowy mountain-copes,
And the green woods beneath them on the slopes?"

"A mist envelopes them; I cannot trace
Their outline; but the day comes on apace.
The clouds roll up in gold and amber flakes,
And all the stars grow dim. The morning breaks."

"We thank thee, lonely watcher on the tower;
But look again; and tell us, hour by hour,
All thou beholdest. Many of us die
Ere the day comes; oh, give us a reply!"

"I see the hill-tops now; and Chanticleer
Crows his prophetic carol on mine ear;—
I see the distant woods and fields of corn,
And Ocean gleaming in the light of morn."

"Again—again—O watcher on the tower!
We thirst for daylight, and we bide the hour,
Patient, but longing. Tell us, shall it be
A bright, calm, glorious daylight for the free?"

"I hope, but cannot tell. I hear a song,
Vivid as day itself, and clear and strong,
As of a lark—young prophet of the noon—
Pouring in sunlight his seraphic tune."

"What doth he say, O watcher on the tower?
Is he a prophet? Doth the dawning hour

Inspire his music? *Is* his chant sublime,
Fill'd with the glories of the Future time?"

"He prophesies ;—his heart is full ;—his lay
Tells of the brightness of a peaceful day ;
A day not cloudless, nor devoid of storm,
But sunny for the most, and clear and warm."

"We thank thee, watcher on the lonely tower,
For all thou tellest. Sings he of an hour
When Error shall decay, and Truth grow strong,
And Right shall rule supreme and vanquish Wrong?"

"He sings of brotherhood, and joy, and peace,
Of days when jealousies and hate shall cease :
When war shall die, and man's progressive mind
Soar as unfetter'd as its God design'd."

"Well done! thou watcher on the lonely tower!
Is the day breaking? dawns the happy hour?
We pine to see it:—tell us, yet again,
If the broad daylight breaks upon the plain?"

"It breaks—it comes—the misty shadows fly :—
A rosy radiance gleams upon the sky ;
The mountain-tops reflect it calm and clear ;
The plain is yet in shade, but day is near."

CLEAR THE WAY.

MEN of thought ! be up, and stirring
Night and day :
Sow the seed—withdraw the curtain—
CLEAR THE WAY !
Men of action, aid and cheer them,
As ye may !
There's a fount about to stream,
There's a light about to beam,
There's a warmth about to glow,
There's a flower about to blow ;
There's a midnight blackness changing
Into gray ;
Men of thought and men of action,
CLEAR THE WAY !

Once the welcome light has broken,
Who shall say
What the unimagined glories
Of the day ?
What the evil that shall perish
In its ray ?
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen ;
Aid it, hopes of honest men ;
Aid it, paper—aid it, type—
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,

And our earnest must not slacken
 Into play.
 Men of thought and men of action,
 CLEAR THE WAY!

Lo! a cloud's about to vanish
 From the day;
 And a brazen wrong to crumble
 Into clay.

Lo! the right's about to conquer
 CLEAR THE WAY!

With the Right shall many more
 Enter smiling at the door;
 With the giant Wrong shall fall
 Many others, great and small,
 That for ages long have held us
 For their prey.

Men of thought and men of action,
 CLEAR THE WAY!



THE GOOD TIME COMING.

THERE's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming :
We may not live to see the day,
But earth shall glisten in the ray
Of the good time coming.
Cannon-balls may aid the truth,
But thought's a weapon stronger ;
We'll win our battle by its aid ;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming :
The pen shall supersede the sword,
And Right, not Might, shall be the lord
In the good time coming.
Worth, not Birth, shall rule mankind,
And be acknowledged stronger ;
The proper impulse has been given ;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming :
War in all men's eyes shall be
A monster of iniquity
In the good time coming.

Nations shall not quarrel then,
To prove which is the stronger ;
Nor slaughter men for glory's sake ;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming :
Hateful rivalries of creed
Shall not make their martyrs bleed
In the good time coming.
Religion shall be shorn of pride,
And flourish all the stronger ;
And Charity shall trim her lamp ;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming :
And a poor man's family
Shall not be his misery
In the good time coming.
Every child shall be a help,
To make his right arm stronger ;
The happier he the more he has ;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming :
Little children shall not toil,
Under, or above the soil,
In the good time coming ;

But shall play in healthful fields
Till limbs and mind grow stronger ;
And every one shall read and write ;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming :
The people shall be temperate,
And shall love instead of hate,
In the good time coming.
They shall use, and not abuse,
And make all virtue stronger.
The reformation has begun ;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming :
Let us aid it all we can,
Every woman, every man,
The good time coming.
Smallest helps, if rightly given,
Make the impulse stronger ;
'Twill be strong enough one day ;—
Wait a little longer.



THE WANTS OF THE PEOPLE.

1846.

WHAT do we want? Our daily bread;
 Leave to earn it by our skill;
 Leave to labour freely for it,
 Leave to buy it where we will:
 For 'tis hard upon the many—
 Hard, unpitied by the few,
 To starve and die for want of work,
 Or live half-starved with work to do.

What do we want? Our daily bread;
 Fair reward for labour done;
 Daily bread for wives and children;
 All our wants are merged in one.
 When the fierce fiend Hunger grips us,
 Evil fancies clog our brains,
 Vengeance settles on our hearts,
 And Frenzy gallops through our veins.

What do we want? Our daily bread;
 Give us that; all else will come—
 Self-respect and self-denial,
 And the happiness of home;

Kindly feelings, education,
Liberty for act and thought ;
And surety that, whate'er befall,
Our children shall be fed and taught.

What do we want? Our daily bread ;
Give us *that* for willing toil :
Make us sharers in the plenty
God has shower'd upon the soil ;
And we'll nurse our better natures
With bold hearts and judgment strong,
To do as much as men can do .
To keep the world from going wrong.

What do we want? Our daily bread,
And trade untrammell'd as the wind ;
And from our ranks shall spirits start,
To aid the progress of mankind.
Sages, poets, mechanics,
Mighty thinkers, shall arise,
To take their share of loftier work,
And teach, exalt, and civilize.

What do we want? Our daily bread :—
Grant it :—make our efforts free ;
Let us work and let us prosper ;
You shall prosper more than we ;
And the humblest homes of England
Shall, in proper time, give birth
To better men than we have been,
To live upon a better earth.

THE THREE PREACHERS.

THERE are three preachers, ever preaching,

Fill'd with eloquence and power :—

One is old, with locks of white,

Skinny as an anchorite ;

And he preaches every hour

With a shrill fanatic voice,

And a bigot's fiery scorn :—

“BACKWARD ! ye presumptuous nations ;

Man to misery is born !

Born to drudge, and sweat, and suffer—

Born to labour and to pray ;

BACKWARD ! ye presumptuous nations—

Back !—be humble and obey !”

The second is a milder preacher ;

Soft he talks as if he sung ;

Sleek and slothful is his look,

And his words, as from a book,

Issue glibly from his tongue.

With an air of self-content,

High he lifts his fair white hands ;

“STAND YE STILL ! ye restless nations ;

And be happy, all ye lands !

Fate is law, and law is perfect ;

If ye meddle, ye will mar ;

Change is rash, and ever was so :

We are happy as we are.”


Mightier is the younger preacher,
Genius flashes from his eyes ;
And the crowds who hear his voice,
Give him, while their souls rejoice,
Throbbing bosoms for replies.
Awed they listen, yet elated,
While his stirring accents fall :—
“ FORWARD ! ye deluded nations,
Progress is the rule of all :
Man was made for healthful effort ;
Tyranny has crush'd him long ;
He shall march from good to better,
And do battle with the wrong.

“ Standing still is childish folly,
Going backward is a crime :
None should patiently endure
Any ill that he can cure ;
ONWARD ! keep the march of Time.
Onward ! while a wrong remains
To be conquer'd by the right ;
While Oppression lifts a finger
To affront us by his might ;
While an error clouds the reason
Of the universal heart,
Or a slave awaits his freedom,
Action is the wise man's part.

“ Lo ! the world is rich in blessings :
Earth and Ocean, flame and wind,
Have unnumber'd secrets still,
To be ransack'd when you will,
For the service of mankind ;

Science is a child as yet,
And her power and scope shall grow,
And her triumphs in the future
Shall diminish toil and woe ;
Shall extend the bounds of pleasure
With an ever-widening ken,
And of woods and wildernesses
Make the homes of happy men.

“ONWARD!—there are ills to conquer,
Daily wickedness is wrought,
Tyranny is swoln with Pride,
Bigotry is deified,
Error intertwined with Thought.
Vice and Misery ramp and crawl ;—
Root them out, their day has pass'd ;
Goodness is alone immortal ;
Evil was not made to last :
ONWARD ! and all Earth shall aid us
Ere our peaceful flag be furl'd.”—
And the preaching of this preacher
Stirs the pulses of the world.



OLD OPINIONS.

ONCE we thought that Power Eternal
Had decreed the woes of man ;
That the human heart was wicked
Since its pulses first began ;
That the earth was but a prison,
Dark and joyless at the best,
And that men were born for evil,
And imbibed it from the breast ;
That 'twas vain to think of urging
Any earthly progress on.
Old opinions ! rags and tatters !
Get you gone ! get you gone !

Once we thought all human sorrows
Were predestined to endure ;
That, as man had never made them,
Men were impotent to cure ;
That the few were borne superior,
Though the many might rebel ;—
Those to sit at Nature's table,
These to pick the crumbs that fell ;
Those to live upon the fatness,
These the starvelings, lank and wan.
Old opinions ! rags and tatters !
Get you gone ! get you gone !


Once we thought that holy Freedom
 Was a cursed and tainted thing ;
 Foe of Peace, and Law, and Virtue ;
 Foe of Magistrate and King ;
 That all vile degraded passion
 Ever follow'd in her path ;
 Lust and Plunder, War and Rapine,
 Tears, and Anarchy, and Wrath ;
 That the angel was a cruel,
 Haughty, blood-stain'd Amazon.
Old opinions ! rags and tatters !
Get you gone ! get you gone !

Once we thought it right to foster
 Local jealousies and pride ;
 Right to hate another nation
 Parted from us by a tide ;
 Right to go to war for glory,
 Or extension of domain ;
 Right, through fear of foreign rivals,
 To refuse the needful grain ;
 Right to bar it out till Famine
 Drew the bolt with fingers wan.
Old opinions ! rags and tatters !
Get you gone ! get you gone !

Once we thought that Education
 Was a luxury for the few ;
 That to give it to the many
 Was to give it scope undue :

That 'twas foolish to imagine
It could be as free as air,
Common as the glorious sunshine
To the child of want and care :
That the poor man, educated,
Quarrell'd with his toil anon.
Old opinions ! rags and tatters !
Get you gone ! get you gone !

Old opinions, rags and tatters ;
Ye are worn ;—ah, quite threadbare !
We must cast you off for ever ;—
We are wiser than we were :
Never fitting, always cramping,
Letting in the wind and sleet,
Chilling us with rheums and agues,
Or inflaming us with heat.
We have found a mental raiment
Purer, whiter, to put on.
Old opinions ! rags and tatters !
Get you gone ! get you gone !



DAILY WORK.

1846.

WHO lags for dread of daily work,
 And his appointed task would shirk,
 Commits a folly and a crime ;
 A soulless slave—a paltry knave—
 A clog upon the wheels of Time.
 With work to do, and store of health,
 The man's unworthy to be free,
 Who will not give, that he may live,
 His daily toil for daily fee.

No ! Let us work ! We only ask
 Reward proportion'd to our task :—
 We have no quarrel with the great ;
 No feud with rank—with mill or bank—
 No envy of a lord's estate.
 If we can earn sufficient store
 To satisfy our daily need ;
 And can retain, for age and pain,
 A fraction, we are rich indeed.

No dread of toil have we or ours ;
 We know our worth, and weigh our powers ;
 The more we work the more we win :
 Success to Trade ! Success to Spade !
 And to the corn that's coming in !

And joy to him, who o'er his task
Remembers toil is Nature's plan ;
Who, working, thinks—and never sinks
His independence as a man.

Who only asks for humblest wealth,
Enough for competence and health ;
And leisure, when his work is done,
To read his book by chimney-nook,
Or stroll at setting of the sun :
Who toils, as every man should toil,
For fair reward, erect and free.
These are the men—the best of men—
These are the men we mean to be !



AN EMIGRANT'S BLESSING.

FAREWELL, England ! blessings on thee,
 Stern and niggard as thou art ;
 Harshly, Mother, thou hast used me,
 And my bread thou hast refused me ;
 But 'tis agony to part.
 'Twill pass over ; for I would not
 Bear again what I could tell—
 Half the ills that I have suffer'd—
 Though I loved thee twice as well.
 So—my blessings on thee, England,
 And a long and last farewell !

Other regions will provide me
 Independence for my age,
 Recompense for hard exertion—
 For my children, the reversion
 Of a goodly heritage.
 England—*this* thou couldst not give me ;
 England, pamperer of squires,
 Landlord-ridden, pride-encumber'd,
 Quencher of the poor man's fires ;—
 But, farewell ! My blessing on thee ;
 Thou art country of my sires.

Though I love, I'm glad to fly thee ;
 Who would live in hopeless toil,
 Evil-steep'd and ill-exampled,
 Press'd and jostled, crush'd and trampled,
 Interloper on the soil—

If there were *one* other country
Where an honest man might go,
Winning corn-fields from the forest—
All his own, too—blow by blow ?
Farewell, England—I regret thee,
But my tears refuse to flow.

Haply o'er the Southern ocean
I shall do my part, to rear
A new nation, Saxon-blooded,
Which, with plenty crown'd and studded,
To its happy children dear,
Shall eclipse thy fame, O England ;
Taught and warn'd alike by thee ;—
Mightier with unshackled commerce,
Mightier in her men more free,
Mightier in her virgin vigour,
And her just equality.

But farewell. My blessing on thee !
Never, till my latest day,
Shall my memory cease to ponder
On thy fate, where'er I wander ;—
Never shall I cease to pray
That the many may be happy ;
That the few their pride may quell ;
That thou mayst in peaceful progress
All thy misery dispel ;—
Queen of nations : once their model—
God be with thee ! Fare-thee-well !

RAILWAYS.

"No poetry in Railways!" foolish thought
 Of a dull brain, to no fine music wrought.
 By mammon dazzled, though the people prize
 The gold alone, yet shall not we despise
 The triumphs of our time, or fail to see
 Of pregnant mind the fruitful progeny
 Ushering the daylight of the world's new morn.
 Look up, ye doubters, be no more forlorn!—
 Smooth your rough brows, ye little wise: rejoice,
 Ye who despond: and with exulting voice
 Salute, ye earnest spirits of our time,
 The young Improvement ripening to her prime,
 Who, in the fulness of her genial youth,
 Prepares the way for Liberty and Truth,
 And breaks the barriers that, since earth began,
 Have made mankind the enemy of man.

Lay down your rails, ye nations, near and far—
 Yoke your full trains to Steam's triumphal car;
 Link town to town; unite in iron bands
 The long-estranged and oft-embattled lands.
 Peace, mild-eyed seraph—Knowledge, light divine,
 Shall send their messengers by every line.
 Men, join'd in amity, shall wonder long
 That Hate had power to lead their fathers wrong;
 Or that false Glory lured their hearts astray,
 And made it virtuous and sublime to slay.

Blessings on science! When the earth seem'd old,
When Faith grew doting, and the Reason cold,
'Twas she discover'd that the world was young,
And taught a language to its lisping tongue:
'Twas she disclosed a future to its view,
And made old knowledge pale before the new.

Blessings on Science! In her dawning hour
Faith knit her brow, alarm'd for ancient power;
Then look'd again upon her face sincere,
Held out her hand, and hail'd her—Sister dear;
And Reason, free as eagle on the wind,
Swoop'd o'er the fallow meadows of the mind,
And, clear of vision, saw what seed would grow
On the hill-slopes, or in the vales below;
What in the sunny South, or nipping Nord,
And from her talons dropp'd it as she soar'd.

Blessings on Science, and her handmaid Steam!
They make Utopia only half a dream;
And show the fervent, of capacious souls,
Who watch the ball of Progress as it rolls,
That all as yet completed, or begun,
Is but the dawning that precedes the sun.



THE FERMENTATION.

LONELY sitting, deeply musing,
 On a still and starry night,
 Full of fancies, when my glances
 Turn'd upon those far romances
 Scatter'd o'er the Infinite;
 On a sudden, broke upon me
 Murmurs, rumours, quick and loud,
 And, half-waking, I discover'd
 An innumerable crowd.

'Mid the uproar of their voices
 Scarcely could I hear a word;
 There was rushing, there was crushing,
 And a sound like music gushing,
 And a roar like forests stirr'd
 By a fierce wind passing o'er them:—
 And a voice came now and then,
 Louder than them all, exclaiming,
 "Give us Justice! we are men!"

And the longer that I listen'd,
 More distinctly could I hear,
 'Mid the poising of the voicing,
 Sounds of sorrow and rejoicing,
 Utterance of Hope and Fear;

And a clash of disputation,
And of words at random cast—
Truths and Errors intermingling,
Of the present and the past.

Some where shouting that Oppression
Held their consciences in thrall;
Some were crying, "Men are dying,
Hunger-smit, and none supplying
Bread, the birthright of us all."
Some exclaim'd that Wealth was haughty,
Harsh, and callous to the poor;—
Others cried, the poor were vicious,
Idle, thankless, insecure.

Some, with voice of indignation,
Told the story of their wrongs,
Full of dolour—life-controller—
That for difference of colour
They were sold like cattle-throngs.
Others, pallid, weak, and shivering,
Said that laws were surely bad,
When the willing hand was idle,
And the cheeks of Toil were sad.

"Give us freedom for the conscience!"
"Equal rights!"—"Unfetter'd Mind!"
"Education!"—"Compensation!"
"Justice for a mighty nation!"
"Progress!"—"Peace with all mankind!"

"Let us labour!"—"Give us churches!"

"Give us Corn where'er it grow!"

These, and other cries, around me

Surged incessant, loud or low.

Old opinions jarr'd with new ones ;

New ones jostled with the old ;

In such Babel, few were able

To distinguish truth from fable,

In the tale their neighbours told.

But one voice above all others

Sounded like the voice of ten,

Clear, sonorous, and persuasive :—

"Give us Justice! we are men!"

And I said, "Oh Sovereign Reason,

Sire of Peace and Liberty!

Aid for ever their endeavour:—

Boldly let them still assever

All the rights they claim in thee.

Aid the mighty Fermentation

Till it purifies at last,

And the Future of the people

Is made brighter than the Past."



THE POOR MAN'S SUNDAY WALK.

THE morning of our rest has come,
The sun is shining clear;
I see it on the steeple-top;
Put on your shawl, my dear,
And let us leave the smoky town,
The dense and stagnant lane,
And take our children by the hand
To see the fields again.
I've pined for air the live-long week;
For the smell of new-mown hay;
For a pleasant, quiet, country walk,
On a sunny Sabbath-day.

Our parish church is cold and damp;
I need the air and sun;
We'll sit together on the grass,
And see the children run.
We'll watch them gathering buttercups,
Or cowslips in the dell,
Or listen to the cheerful sounds
Of the far-off village bell;
And thank our God with grateful hearts,
Though in the fields we pray;
And bless the healthful breeze of heaven,
On a sunny Sabbath-day.

I'm weary of the stifling room
Where all the week we're pent,—
Of the alley fill'd with wretched life,
And odours pestilent ;
And long once more to see the fields,
And the grazing sheep and beeves ;
To hear the lark amid the clouds,
And the wind among the leaves ;
And all the sounds that glad the air
On green hills far away—
The sounds that breathe of Peace and Love,
On a sunny Sabbath-day.

For somehow, though they call it wrong,
In church I cannot kneel
With half the natural thankfulness
And piety I feel,
When out, on such a day as this,
I lie upon the sod,
And think that every leaf and flower
Is grateful to its God :
That I, who feel the blessing more,
Should thank Him more than they
That I can elevate my soul
On a sunny Sabbath-day.

Put on your shawl, and let us go ;—
For one day let us think
Of something else than daily care,
Of toil, and meat, and drink :



A WELCOME TO LOUIS PHILIPPE.

MARCH, 1848.

WE do not cheer thee, faithless king,
 Nor shout before thee now ;
 We have no reverence for a thing
 So false of heart as thou :
 We form no crowds to welcome thee,
 And yet we cannot hate—
 Though parricide of liberty—
 An old man desolate.

When, in such sudden dark eclipse,
 We see thine overthrow ;
 The hisses die upon our lips,
 We turn and let thee go.
 Poor, weak, denuded royalty,
 So abject, so forlorn,
 The greatness of thy misery
 Shall shield thee from our scorn.

We saw thee yesterday elate
 In majesty and pride,
 Thy flowing wealth, thy gorgeous state,
 Thy power half deified.
 Based on the faults of humankind
 We saw thy meshes lurk,
 And constant Fortune's favouring wind
 Still waft thee tools to work.

We saw thee building, building up
Thy pomps before our eyes,
And ever in thy flowing cup
The sparkling bubbles rise :—
Alliance, worship, all were thine,
And, spectacle unmeet,
Ev'n genius, drunk with bribery's wine,
Lay grovelling at thy feet.

When earnest men affirm'd the right,
And ask'd the judging Heaven,
If ever, since the birth of light,
Had fraud and falsehood thriven,
Our fingers pointed with mistrust
To thee as our reply—
A living mockery of the just,
That gave their truth the lie.

All this thou wert but yestermorn—
Thy fall is freedom's birth ;
To-day thou art a mark for scorn,
A vagrant on the earth.
A truth pervading all the lands
Inspired the people's heart,
It throb'd—it beat—it nerved their hands—
It made thee what thou art.

Lo, like a coward, self-accused,
We saw thee skulk and fly,
And hug a life that none refused,
For want of strength to die.

To 'scape th' imaginary chase
That made thy soul afraid,
We saw thy shifts, thy shaven face,
Thy piteous masquerade.

We blush'd, we groan'd, to see thee seek
Mean safety in disguise,
And, like a knavish bankrupt, sneak
From sight of honest eyes.
Forlorn old man! our hate expires
At spectacle like this;—
Our pity kindles all its fires—
We have not heart to hiss.

Live on—thou hast not lived in vain!
A mighty truth uprears
Its radiant forehead o'er thy reign,
And lights the coming years:
Though specious Tyranny be strong
Humanity is true,
And Empire based upon a wrong
Is rotten through and through.

Though falsehoods into system wrought,
Condensed into a plan,
May stand awhile, their power is nought—
There is a God in man.
His revolutions speak in ours,
And make His justice plain—
Old man forlorn, live out thine hours,
Thou hast not lived in vain.

THE DREAM OF THE REVELLER.

AROUND the board the guests were met, the lights
 above them beaming,
And in their cups, replenish'd oft, the ruddy wine
 was streaming ;
Their cheeks were flush'd, their eyes were bright,
 their hearts with pleasure bounded,
The song was sung, the toast was given, and loud
 the revel sounded.
I drain'd a goblet with the rest, and cried, "Away
 with sorrow !
Let us be happy for to-day ; what care we for to-
 morrow ?"
But as I spoke, my sight grew dim, and slumber
 deep came o'er me,
And, 'mid the whirl of mingling tongues, this vision
 pass'd before me.

Methought I saw a demon rise : he held a mighty
 bicker,
Whose burnish'd sides ran brimming o'er with floods
 of burning liquor,
Around him press'd a clamorous crowd, to taste this
 liquour, greedy,
But chiefly came the poor and sad, the suffering and
 the needy ;

All those oppress'd by grief or debt, the dissolute,
the lazy,
Blear-eyed old men and reckless youths, and palsied
women crazy ;
“ Give, give ! ” they cried, “ Give, give us drink, to
drown all thought of sorrow ;
If we are happy for to-day, what care we for to-
morrow ? ”

The *first* drop warm'd their shivering skins, and
drove away their sadness ;
The *second* lit their sunken eyes, and fill'd their
souls with gladness ;
The *third* drop made them shout and roar, and play
each furious antic ;
The *fourth* drop boil'd their very blood ; and the
fifth drop drove them frantic.—
“ Drink ! ” said the Demon, “ Drink your fill ! drink
of these waters mellow ;—
They'll make your eye-balls sear and dull, and turn
your white skins yellow ;
They'll fill your homes with care and grief, and
clothe your backs with tatters ;
They'll fill your hearts with evil thoughts ; but never
mind !—what matters ?

“ Though virtue sink, and reason fail, and social ties
dissever,
I'll be your friend in hour of need, and find you
homes for ever ;

For I have built three mansions high, three strong
and goodly houses,
To lodge at last each jolly soul who all his life
carouses.—

The *first*, it is a spacious house, to all but sots
appalling,

Where, by the parish bounty fed, vile, in the sun-
shine crawling,

The worn-out drunkard ends his days, and eats the
dole of others,

A plague and burthen to himself, an eyesore to his
brothers.

“The *second* is a lazarhouse, rank, fetid, and unholy;
Where, smitten by diseases foul and hopeless melan-
choly,

The victims of potations deep pine on the couch of
sadness,

Some calling Death to end their pain, and some
imploring Madness.

The *third* and last is black and high, the abode of
guilt and anguish,

And full of dungeons deep and fast, where death-
doom'd felons languish ;

So drain the cup, and drain again ! One of my
goodly houses

Shall lodge at last each jolly soul who to the dregs
carouses !”

But well he knew—that Demon old—how vain was
all his preaching,

The ragged crew that round him flock'd were heed-
less of his teaching ;

Even as they heard his fearful words, they cried,
with shouts of laughter,—

“Out on the fool who mars to-day with thoughts of
an hereafter!

We care not for thy houses three; we live but for
the present;

And merry will we make it yet, and quaff our
bumpers pleasant.”

Loud laugh'd the fiend to hear them speak, and,
lifting high his bicker,

“Body and soul are mine!” said he; “I’ll have them
both for liquor.”



THE POET AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMIST.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMIST.

PRITHEE, Poet, why this spinning,
Spinning verses all the day?
Vain and idle thy vocation,—
Thy art useless to the nation,
In thy labour and thy play.

Little doth the world esteem thee,
And it takes thee at thy worth;
Loftiest rhyme that e'er was fashion'd,
Sounding, gorgeous, or impassion'd,
Is a drug upon the earth.

Go—and be a cotton-spinner;
Put thy hand upon the spade;
Weave a basket out of willow;
Dig the mine, or sail the billow—
Anything but such a trade.

THE POET.

Why thy scorn, O man of logic?
Speak of that within thy ken:
I despise thee not;—thy labours,
If they make us better neighbours,
Are not valueless to men.

Highly all the world esteems thee,
 And a poet may declare,
 That the wise should place reliance
 On the efforts of thy science
 To diminish human care.

Bring thy hidden truths to daylight,
 And I'll ne'er complain of thee.
 Dull thou'rt call'd—and dulness cumber; ;
 Yet there's wisdom in *thy* numbers ;
 Leave *my* numbers unto me.

Each of us fulfils a duty,
 And, though scorn'd, I'll cling to mine,
 With a passion ever growing,
 In my heart, to overflowing ;—
 Cling thou with as much to thine.

Thou'rt a preacher ; *I'm* a prophet.
Thou discourest to thy time ;
I discourse to generations,
 And the thoughts of unborn nations
 Shall be fashion'd by my rhyme.

Thou, to dubious politicians,
 Staid and passionless and slow,
 Givest *pros* and *cons* with candour,
 Bland and patient, ever blander
 As thy trim deductions flow.

I send forth electric flashes
To the bosom of the crowd ;
Rule its pulses, cheer its sadness,
Make it throb and pant with gladness,
Till it answers me aloud.

Not for me to linger idly,
Gathering garlands by the way ;
Singing but of flowers and sunsets,
Lovers' vows, or nightly onsets,
Or of ladies fair as May.

No ; the poet loves his calling ;
Nature's lyre is all his own ;
He can sweep its strings prophetic,
Till the nations, sympathetic,
Gather breathless to its tone.

For he knows the PEOPLE listen
When a mighty spirit speaks,
And that none can stir them duly
But the man who loves them truly,
And from *them* his impulse seeks.

What they feel, but cannot utter ;
What they hope for, day and night ;—
These the words by which he fires them,
Prompts them, leads them, and inspires them
To do battle for the right.

These the words by which the many
 Cope for justice with the few ;—
These their watchwords, when Oppression,
 Would resist the small concession,
 But a fraction of their due.

These the poet, music-hearted,
 Blazons to the listening land,
 And for these all lands shall prize him,
 Though the foolish may despise him,
 Or the wise misunderstand.

Go thy way, then, man of logic,
 In thy fashion, speak thy truth ;—
 Thou hast fix'd, and I have chosen ;—
 Thou shalt speak to blood that's frozen,
 I to vigour and to youth.

Haply we shall both be useful,
 And, perchance, more useful thou,
 If their full degree of merit
 To all other moods of spirit
 Thou wilt cheerfully allow.

As for me, I fear no scorning,
 And shall speak with earnest mind
 What is in me ;—self-rewarded
 If I aid, though unregarded,
 The advancement of my kind.

TO A FRIEND AFRAID OF CRITICS.

AFRAID of critics ! an unworthy fear :
Great minds must learn their greatness and be bold.
Walk on thy way ; bring forth thine own true
thought ;
Love thy high calling only for itself,
And find in working recompense for work,
And Envy's shaft shall whizz at thee in vain.
Despise not censure ;—weigh if it be just ;
And if it be—amend, whate'er the thought
Of him who cast it. Take the wise man's praise,
And love thyself the more that thou couldst earn
Meed so exalted ; but the blame of fools,
Let it blow over like an idle whiff
Of poisonous tobacco in the streets,
Invasive of thy unoffending nose :—
Their praise no better, only more perfumed.

The Critics—let me paint them as they are.
Some few I know, and love them from my soul ;
Polish'd, acute, deep read ; of inborn taste
Cultured into a virtue ; full of pith
And kindly vigour, having won their spurs
In the great rivalry of friendly mind,
And generous to others, though unknown,
Who would, having a thought, let all men know
The new discovery. But these are rare ;

And if thou find one, take him to thy heart,
And think his unbought praise both palm and crown,
A thing worth living for, were nought beside.
Fear thou no critic, if thou'rt true thyself ;—
And look for fame *now* if the wise approve,
Or from a wiser jury yet unborn.
The Poetaster may be harm'd enough,
But Criticasters cannot crush a Bard.

If to be famous be thy sole intent,
And greatness be a mark beyond thy reach,
Manage the critics, and thou'lt win the game;
Invite them to thy board, and give them feasts,
And foster them with unrelaxing care;
And they will praise thee in their partial sheets,
And quite ignore the worth of better men.
But if thou wilt not court them, let them go,
And scorn the praise that sells itself for wine,
Or tacks itself upon success alone,
Hanging like spittle on a rich man's beard.

One, if thou'rt great, will cite from thy new book
The tamest passage,—something that thy soul
Revolts at, now the inspiration's o'er,
And would give all thou hast to blot from print
And sink into oblivion ;—and will vaunt
The thing as beautiful, transcendent, rare—
The best thing thou hast done! Another friend,
With finer sense, will praise thy greatest thought,
Yet cavil at it ; putting in his "*buts*"
And "*yets*," and little obvious hints,
That though 'tis good, the critic could have made

A work superior in its every part.
Another, in a pert and savage mood,
Without a reason, will condemn thee quite,
And strive to quench thee in a paragraph.
Another, with dishonest waggersy,
Will twist, misquote, and utterly pervert
Thy thoughts and words ; and hug himself meanwhile
In the delusion, pleasant to his soul,
That thou art crush'd, and he a gentleman.

Another, with a specious fair pretence,
Immaculately wise, will skim thy book,
And self-sufficient, from his desk look down
With undisguised contempt on thee and thine ;
And sneer and snarl thee, from his weekly court,
From an idea, spawn of his conceit,
That the best means to gain a great renown
For wisdom is to sneer at all the world,
With strong denial that a good exists ;—
That all is bad, imperfect, feeble, stale,
Except this critic, who outshines mankind.

Another, with a foolish zeal, will prate
Of thy great excellence, and on thy head
Heap epithet on epithet of praise
In terms preposterous, that thou wilt blush
To be so smother'd with such fulsome lies.
Another, calmer, with laudations thin,
Unsavoury and weak, will make it seem
That his good-nature, not thy merit, prompts
The baseless adulation of his pen.
Another, with a bull-dog's bark, will bay

Foul names against thee for some fancied slight
Which thou ne'er dream'dst of, and will damn thy
work

For spite against the worker ; while the next,
Who thinks thy faith or politics a crime,
Will bray displeasure from his monthly stall,
And prove thee dunce, that disagreeest with him.

And, last of all, some solemn sage, whose nod
Trimestrial awes a world of little wits,
Will carefully avoid to name thy name,
Although thy words are in the mouths of men,
And thy ideas in their inmost hearts,
Moulding events, and fashioning thy time
To nobler efforts.—Little matters it !
Whate'er thou art, thy value will appear.
If thou art bad, no praise will buoy thee up ;
If thou art good, no censure weigh thee down,
Nor silence nor neglect prevent thy fame.
So fear not thou the critics ! Speak thy thought ;
And, if thou'rt worthy, in the people's love
Thy name shall live, while lasts thy mother tongue!

BRITISH FREEDOM.

I.

We want no flag, no flaunting rag,
For LIBERTY to fight;
We want no blaze of murderous guns,
To struggle for the right.
Our spears and swords are printed words,
The mind our battle-plain;
We've won such victories before,
And so we shall again.

II.

We love no triumphs sprung of force—
They stain her brightest cause:
'Tis not in blood that Liberty
Inscribes her civil laws.
She writes them on the people's heart
In language clear and plain;
True thoughts have moved the world before,
And so they shall again.

III.

We yield to none in earnest love
Of Freedom's cause sublime;
We join the cry, "FRATERNITY!"
We keep the march of Time.

And yet we grasp nor pike nor spear,
Our victories to obtain ;
We've won without their aid before,
And so we shall again.

IV.

We want no aid of barricade
To show a front to wrong ;
We have a citadel in truth,
More durable and strong.
Calm words, great thoughts, unflinching faith,
Have never striv'n in vain ;
They've won our battles many a time,
And so they shall again.

V.

Peace, Progress, Knowledge, Brotherhood—
The ignorant may sneer,
The bad deny ; but we rely
To see their triumph near.
No widows' groans shall load our cause,
Nor blood of brethren stain ;
We've won without such aid before,
And so we shall again.



THE DYING MOTHER.

THE angels call me—lo, I come !
Children, I die ! I'm going home !
All pangs, save one, have pass'd away,
All griefs and sufferings of clay,
Except this lingering fond distress,
That yields not to forgetfulness—
The last affection of my heart,
The pain, the grief, that we must part.

No more ! a hope to sorrow given
Says earthly love may bloom in heaven,
May soar, if pure, to God's right hand :
I go, I seek the happy land.
Ah ! no, not yet ; the sunshine fair
Revives me for a while : the air
Blows calm and cool. Oh, living breath !
It gives me strength to look on death.

It gives me courage to implore,
By all the love you ever bore,—
A foolish, fond, but last request,—
That you will choose my place of rest,
In the green fields, beneath a tree,
Where west winds linger lovingly,

Where dews may drop and buds may bloom,
And moonlight sleep upon my tomb.

I would not that my bones should lie
(Forgive the earthly vanity)
In rotting churchyards of the town,
Dishonour'd, public, trodden down,
To be disturb'd, untomb'd, exposed,
The secrets of my grave disclosed,
Ere kind decay had blurr'd the line
Of form and feature that were mine.

Although no pangs can touch our dust,
And death is stingless on the just,
Yet grant my prayer, and lay my clod
Far from the town, beneath the sod.
Who strews a flower, or drops a tear,
Or sighs when passing crowds may hear—
Or watches fondly over graves
Where busy Traffic works her slaves?

Husband, I die—my peace is won ;
I linger, but my race is run.
Oh ! choose a grave where I may sleep,
Untroubled, in a silence deep ;
Where thou, perchance, at evening's hour,
Mayst o'er my headstone drop a flower ;
And where, each sunny Sabbath-day,
The children may come forth to pray.

Farewell, the world ! Come—kiss my lips !
My soul grows dark—'tis life's eclipse.

Husband, farewell—I'm going hence—
I loved thee—love thee—parting sense,
Abide!—and let my tongue bestow,
A mother's blessing ere I go!—
The angels call me—lo, I come!
Children, I die! I'm going home!

LONDON, 1849.



FREEDOM AND LAW.

WILDEST wind that shakes the blossoms,
 Or on ocean chafes and swells,
 Blows not uncontroll'd and wanton,
 But as LAW compels.

Streams that wander and meander,
 Loitering in the meads to play,
 Or that burst in roaring torrents
 Into foam and spray;

Avalanches, forest-crushing,
 Fires that rage in Etna's breast,
 Lava-floods and tides of ocean—
 All obey the same behest.

Law releases, Law restrains them :—
 • Lo! the Moon, her forehead bent
 Earthward, makes her revolution,
 Docile, beauteous, and content.

Lo! the Earth, her mighty mistress,
 In her own appointed place,
 Yields, like her, sublime obedience
 To the Law that governs space.

And the godlike Sun, exhaling
Light and Life from every pore,
On his axis, law-directed,
Wheels majestic evermore ;

Bearing with him to Orion
All the worlds that round him shine,
To complete the awful cycle
Of a destiny divine.

While the Stars and Constellations,
Glowing in eternal light,
Teach the Majesty of Order,
And that LAW is Infinite.

Is the immortal spirit freer,
Mated with its mortal clod ?
Lo ! it soars, and, faith-supported,
Claims affinity with God.

Proudly it disdains the shackles
Of the frame to which it clings,
And would fly to heights celestial
Upon Love's angelic wings.

But the hand of LAW restrains it ;
Narrow is the widest span,
Measured by the deeds or efforts
Of the aspiring soul of man.

Like the imprison'd lark, that carols
To salute the dawning day,
It can see the sky, and gather
Hope and rapture from its ray.

It can see the waving branches
Of its long-lost happy bowers;
It can feel the heavenly breezes,
And the scent of meadow flowers.

But if it would strive to reach them,
It is doom'd to fruitless pain,
And with bleeding bosom struggles
At its prison-doors in vain.

If the mind be less entrammell'd,
And is freed from sensual bound;
Still the Law restrains and moulds it,
And attracts it to the ground.

Like the young rejoicing eaglet,
Knowing nought of gyves and bars,
It may imp its virgin pinions
By a flight towards the stars;—

High above the sterile Andes,
Or the Himalayan snow,
Breasting ether, robed in sunlight,
Unimpeded it may go.

But a Law has placed its limits,
And to pass them should it dare,
Numbness falls upon its pinions,
Death o'ercanopies the air.

Such thy fate, terrestrial Spirit!—
Such thy freedom;—thou mayst soar
To the empyrean summits,
Where no mortal breathed before.

But Infinitude surrounds thee;
Nature stays thee in thy flight;
Thou must turn thee, or be stricken
Powerless on thy topmost height.

Thou must travel lower, lower,—
Nearer to the earthly mould—
Safer for thee—there to fashion
New ideas out of old.

There to judge of the unfathom'd,
By the things within thy ken,
Of the ways of God Eternal
By the futile ways of men.

Yet, oh Soul! there's Freedom for thee;
Thou mayst win it;—not below;—
Not on earth with mortal vesture,
Where to love, to feel, to know.

Is to suffer; but unfetter'd,
Thou mayst spring to riper life,
Purified from Hate and Evil,
And Mortality and Strife.

Death is gaoler; he'll release thee;
Through his portals thou shalt see
The perfection that awaits thee,
If thou'rt worthy to be free.

Be thou meek, to exaltation;—
Death shall give thee wings to soar;
Loving God, and knowing all things,
Upwards springing evermore!



TO IMPATIENT GENIUS.

PAINTER, that with soul-creations
Wouldst attain th' applause of nations,
And deserve a name of glory
To be writ in future story,
 Work thy way.
Live with Nature, love her truly,
Wisely, wholly:—and so duly
 Bide thy day.
With high thoughts thy mind adorning,
Heed no critic's shallow scorning,
 Nor at yelping curs repine:
Every light must cast a shadow,
 So must thine.

Sculptor, with ambition glowing,
Steep thyself to overflowing
In the majesty and greatness,
Strength, and beauty, and sedateness
 Of th' antique:
But forget not living Nature,
Heavenly in its form and feature,
 For the Greek.
Beauty is renew'd for ever:—
Let its love support endeavour,
 Though neglect enwrap thee now—
Work:—and men will find a laurel
 For thy brow.

Poet, singing in the earnest
Love and Hope with which thou burnest,
And upon a lofty summit
Sounding Nature with the plummet
 Of thy song,—
Grieve not if thy voice be chidden,
And thy tuneful lustre hidden
 Under wrong.
Scorn not Fame, but rise above it;
Truth rewards the minds that love it;
 Like the planets shine and sing;—
Noontide follows every morning,—
 Summer, spring.

One and all, be up and doing;
Glory needs incessant wooing;
And if Faith—not mere ambition—
Prompts you to a noble mission,
 You shall rise.
But the acorn, small and flower-like,
Must have time to flourish bower-like
 To the skies.
Bide you yours:—of wealth not lustful;
Ever patient, calm, and trustful:
 Years shall magnify your bole,
And produce immortal foliage
 Of the soul.

THE GOLDEN CITY.

1846.

WEARY and sickening of the dull debate
And clang of politics ; weary of hate
Toss'd at our heads from o'er the Atlantic main,
With foolish speeches ; weary of the pain
And sorrow, and calamity, and crime
Of daily history told us in our time ;
Weary of wrong that rear'd its hydra head
And hiss'd from all its mouths ; dispirited
With rich man's apathy to poor men's hurt,
And poor men's ignorance of their own desert ;
And for a moment hopeless of mankind
And that great cause, the nearest to my mind,
Progress—the dream of poet and of sage—
I lean'd back in my chair and dropp'd the page
Diurnal, fill'd with all the misery,
And fell asleep ; if sleeping it could be
When, in its natural sequence in the brain,
Thought follow'd thought, more palpable and plain
Than when I waked ; when words took music's voice,
And all my being inly did rejoice ;

And what I saw, I sang of at the time,
With ease unparallel'd by waking rhyme,
And to this tune, which, many a day since then,
A haunting music has come back again.

Oh the golden city,
Shining far away!—
With its domes and steeples tall
And the sunlight over all;
With the waters of a bay
Rippling gently at its feet,
Dotted over with a fleet;
Oh the golden city—so beautiful to see!
It shall open wide its portals,
And I'll tell you if it be
The city of the happy,
The city of the free.

Oh the glorious city,
Shining far away!—
In its boundaries every man
Makes his happiness a plan,
That he studies night and day,
Till he thinks it not alone,
Like his property, his own—
Oh the glorious city—so beautiful to see!—
But spreads it round about him,
Till all are bless'd as he;
His mind an inward sunshine,
And bright eternally.

Oh the splendid city,
Gleaming far away!—

Every man, by Love possess'd,
Has a priest within his breast,
And, whene'er he kneels to pray,
Never breathes a thought unkind
Against men of other mind :

Oh the glorious city—so beautiful to see !—

But knows that God Eternal
Will shower all blessings free
On hearts that live to love Him,
And cling to Charity.

Oh the gorgeous city,
Shining far away !—
Where a Competence is bliss,
And each man that lives has this
For his labour of the day ;
A labour not too hard,
And a bountiful reward :

Oh the glorious city—so beautiful to see !—

Where mighty wheels creative
Revolve incessantly,
And Science gains to cheer him
A daily victory.

Oh the glorious city,
Shining far away !—
Neither Misery nor Crime,
Nor the wrongs of ancient Time,
Nor the Kingly lust of sway
Ever come within its wall,
To degrade or to enthrall :

Oh the glorious city—so beautiful to see!—
But Peace, and Love, and Knowledge,
The civilizing Three,
Still prove by Good that has been
The BETTER that may be.

Thus dream'd I, to this rhythm, or something near,
But far more copious, musical, and clear;
And when I waken'd, still my fancy ran
'Twas not *all* dream, and that large Hopes for man
Were not such idle visions as the wise,
In days like ours, should heedlessly despise :
I thought that Love might be Religion yet,
Not form alone, but soul and substance met;
The guide, the light, the glory of the mind,
Th' electric link uniting all mankind ;
That if men loved, and made their Love the Law,
All else would follow—more than ever saw
Poet or Prophet in the utmost light
Of heavenly glory opening on his sight.
But dream, or no dream, take it as it came :
It gave me hope,—it may give you the same.
And as bright Hopes make the Intention strong,
Take heart with me, and muse upon my song.



THE DEPOSITION OF KING CLOG.

KING CLOG was a mighty monarch,
He sat on his lofty seat,
With his golden crown and his ermine-down,
And his courtiers at his feet.
His power seem'd firm as the mountains—
Inert but strong was he ;
And he ruled the land with a heavy hand
And a placid tyranny.
And whenever a boon was ask'd him,
He stared with a calm amaze,
And said, "Ye foolish people,
Ye must stand on the ancient ways."

And long o'er the suffering nations
King CLOG and his courtiers ruled,
And men half-wise, who could use their eyes,
And were taught, and train'd, and school'd,
Conceived this ponderous monarch
Was bountiful, wise, and good ;
And held it just to kneel in the dust
And smear him with gratitude.
And whenever the people murmur'd,
The king and his statesmen frown'd,
But stoutly refused to aid them ;—
And so the world went round.

He was a drowsy monarch,
They were a drowsy crew,
And from hour to hour, in their pride of power,
Duller and drowsier grew :
But a cry for reformation,
Which rose for evermore,
Disturb'd their sleep with its mutterings deep,
And stirr'd them to the core.
"We will not change," said the courtiers,
"For change is ever an ill ;
We'll crush these restless people,
If we cannot keep them still."

•

But CLOG, like all things mortal,
Decay'd as he grew old,
He loved to dose, in warm repose,
High on his throne of gold.
And the people saw his weakness,
And shouted in his ear,
"We've groan'd too long in sorrow and wrong :
Awake ! let the Right appear !"
And the king, with eyes half-open'd,
A lingering answer sent :
"Let me alone, ye rabble—
And toil—and be content !"

"We're weary of our bondage,"
Said they : "Oh, king, be just !—
We delve and spin, but cannot win
Our raiment and our crust ;


We ask no boon from favour
That Justice should not give ;
From cradle to grave we groan and slave,
And die that we may live."
But CLOG replied, hard-hearted,
"Your sires were wise as you ;
They never complain'd ;—poor wretches,
Ye know not what ye do !"

But still the people clamour'd,
And the cry o'er the nations spread—
"Freedom of speech, freedom to teach,
Freedom to earn our bread ;
These must we have, O monarch !
Whether you will or no ;—
Too long we've pined, body and mind,
In ignorance and woe."
"Let me alone, I pray you,"
Said CLOG, "nor vex my soul ;
As the world has roll'd for ages,
So must it ever roll."

And he folded his arms on his bosom,
And slept, and never heard
The measured beat of the trampling feet,
And the oft-repeated word
That came from the solemn conclave
Of the people, met to plan
Some better laws, to aid the cause
Of the happiness of man :

Nor the voices loud resounding,
Like waves upon the shore,
That proclaim'd to the listening nations
That CLOG should rule no more.

But JOG, the next successor,
Who understood his time,
Stepp'd on the throne :—"Father, begone ;
To linger is a crime.
Go to thy bed and slumber,
And leave the world to me ;
Thy mission's done ; thy race is run—
I'm ruler of the free."
So CLOG retired, obedient,
And JOG, his son, was crown'd.
We hope he'll govern better :—
And so the world goes round.



STREET COMPANIONS.

WHENE'ER through Gray's Inn porch I stray,
I meet a spirit by the way ;
He wanders with me all alone,
And talks with me in under-tone.

The crowd is busy seeking gold,
It cannot see what I behold ;
I and the spirit pass along
Unknown, unnoticed, in the throng.

While on the grass the children run,
And maids go loitering in the sun,
I roam beneath the ancient trees,
And talk with him of mysteries.

The dull brick houses of the square,
The bustle of the thoroughfare,
The sounds, the sights, the crush of men,
Are present but forgotten then.

I see them, but I heed them not ;
I hear, but silence clothes the spot ;
All voices die upon my brain
Except that spirit's in the lane.

He breathes to me his burning thought,
He utters words with wisdom fraught,
He tells me truly what I am—
I walk with mighty Verulam.

He goes with me through crowded ways,
A friend and mentor in the maze,
Through Chancery Lane to Lincoln's Inn,
To Fleet Street, through the moil and din.

I meet another spirit there,
A blind old man with forehead fair,
Who ever walks the right-hand side,
Toward the fountain of St. Bride.

Amid the peal of jangling bells,
Or people's roar that falls and swells,
The whirl of wheels and tramp of steeds,
He talks to me of noble deeds.

I hear his voice above the crush,
As to and fro the people rush;
Benign and calm, upon his face
Sits Melancholy, robed in grace.

He hath no need of common eyes,
He sees the fields of Paradise;
He sees and pictures unto mine
A gorgeous vision, most divine.

He tells the story of the Fall,
He names the fiends in battle-call,
And shows my soul, in wonder dumb,
Heaven, Earth, and Pandemonium.

He tells of Lycidas the good,
And the sweet lady in the wood,
And teaches wisdom high and holy,
In mirth and heavenly melancholy.

And oftentimes, with courage high,
He raises Freedom's rallying cry ;
And, ancient leader of the van,
Asserts the dignity of man—

Asserts the rights with trumpet tongue,
That Justice from Oppression wrung,
And poet, patriot, statesman, sage,
Guides by his own a future age.

With such companions at my side
I float on London's human tide ;
An atom on its billows thrown,
But lonely never, nor alone.



THE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW.

LATE or early home returning,
 In the starlight or the rain,
 I beheld that lonely candle
 Shining from his window-pane.
 Ever o'er his tatter'd curtain,
 Nightly looking, I could scan,
 Aye inditing,
 Writing—writing,
 The pale figure of a man ;
 Still discern behind him fall
 The same shadow on the wall.

Far beyond the murky midnight,
 By dim burning of my oil,
 Filling aye his rapid leaflets,
 I have watch'd him at his toil ;
 Watch'd his broad and seamy forehead,
 Watch'd his white industrious hand,

Ever passing
And repassing ;
Watch'd and strove to understand
What impell'd it—gold, or fame—
Bread, or bubble of a name.

Oft I've ask'd, debating vainly
In the silence of my mind,
What the services he render'd
To his country or his kind ;
Whether tones of ancient music,
Or the sound of modern gong,
Wisdom holy,
Humours lowly,
Sermon, essay, novel, song,
Or philosophy sublime,
Fill'd the measure of his time.

No one sought him, no one knew him,
Undistinguish'd was his name ;
Never had his praise been utter'd
By the oracles of fame.
Scanty fare and decent raiment,
Humble lodging, and a fire—
These he sought for,
These he wrought for,
And he gain'd his meek desire ;
Teaching men by written word—
Clinging to a hope deferr'd.

So he lived. At last I miss'd him ;
Still might evening twilight fall,
But no taper lit his lattice—
Lay no shadow on his wall.
In the winter of his seasons,
In the midnight of his day,
'Mid his writing,
And inditing,
Death had beckon'd him away,
Ere the sentence he had plann'd
Found completion at his hand.

But this man, so old and nameless,
Left behind him projects large,
Schemes of progress undeveloped,
Worthy of a nation's charge ;
Noble fancies uncompleted,
Germs of beauty immatured,
Only needing
Kindly feeding
To have flourish'd and endured ;
Meet reward in golden store
To have lived for evermore.

Who shall tell what schemes majestic
Perish in the active brain ?
What humanity is robb'd of,
Ne'er to be restored again ?
What we lose, because we honour

Overmuch the mighty dead,
And dispirit
Living merit,
Heaping scorn upon its head?
Or perchance, when kinder grown,
Leaving it to die—alone?



MARY AND LADY MARY;
 OR,
 NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOURS.

THE Lady Mary's placid eyes
 Beam with no hopes, no memories;
 Beneath their lids no tear-drops flow,
 For Love or Pity, Joy or Woe.
 She never knows, too barren she,
 The fruitfulness of sympathy;
 She never weeps for others' pain,
 Or smiles, except in her disdain.

Her face is pallid as the pearl,
 Her hair is sleek, without a curl;
 With finger-tip she condescends
 To touch the fingers of her friends,
 As if she fear'd their palms might brand
 Some moral stigma on her hand;
 Her pulse is calm, milk-white her skin,
 She hath not blood enough to sin.

A very pattern, sage and staid,
 Of all her sex—a model maid;
 Clear star—bright paragon of men—
 She breaks no law of all the ten;

Pure to the sight as snow-peak'd hill—
As inaccessible and chill ;
In sunshine—but repelling heat—
And freezing in her own conceit.

If ever known to breathe a sigh,
It was for lack of flattery.
Though cold, insensible, and dull,
Admirers call her beautiful ;
She sucks their incense, breathes it, dotes
On her own praise, that gently floats
On Fashion's wave—and lies in wait
To catch admirers of her state.

In publish'd charities her name
Stands foremost, for she buys her fame ;
At church men see her thrice a week,
In spirit proud, in aspect meek ;
Wearing Devotion like a mask,
So marble cold, that sinners ask,
Beholding her at Mercy's throne,
"Is this a woman or a stone?"

But different, far, the little maid,
That dwells unnoticed in the shade
Of Lady Mary's pomp and power ;
A Mary, too, a simple flower,
With face all health, with cheeks all smile,
Undarken'd by one cloud of guile ;
And ruddy lips that seem to say,
"Come, kiss me, children, while ye may."

A cordial hand, a chubby arm,
And hazel eyes, large, soft, and warm ;
Dark hair in curls, a snow-like bust,
A look all innocence and trust,
Lit up at times by sunny mirth,
Like summer smiling on the earth ;
A ringing laugh, whose every note
Bursts in clear music from her throat.

A painter's daughter—poor, perchance,
But rich in native elegance ;
God bless the maid—she may not be
Without *some* touch of vanity.
She twines red rosebuds in her hair,
And smiles to know herself so fair ;
And quite believes, like other belles,
The pleasant tale her mirror tells.

A very woman, full of tears,
Hopes, blushes, tendernesses, fears,
Griefs, laughter, kindness, joys and sighs,
Loves, likings, friendships, sympathies ;
A heart to feel for every woe,
And pity, if not dole, bestow ;
A hand to give from scanty store,
A look to wish the offering more.

In artless faith and virtue strong,
Too loving to do Love a wrong ;
She takes delight in simple things,
And in the sunshine works and sings.

Sweet bird ! so meekly innocent,
The foulest hawk that ever rent
A trusting heart, would gaze, and fly,
And spare her in her purity.

Take Lady Mary ye who will,
Her woods, her castle on the hill,
Her lands o'er half a county spread—
And wither in her loveless bed ;
But give me Mary, frank and free,
Her beauty, grace, and modesty :
I pass My Lady in the mart—
I take the Woman with the heart.



ABOVE AND BELOW.

MIGHTY river, oh, mighty river,
 Rolling in ebb and flow for ever,
 Through the city so vast and old ;
 Through massive bridges—by domes and spires,
 Crown'd with the smoke of a myriad fires ;—
 City of majesty, power, and gold ;—
 Thou lovest to float on thy waters dull
 The white-wing'd fleets so beautiful,
 And the lordly steamers speeding along,
 Wind defying, and swift and strong ;
 Thou bearest them all on thy motherly breast,
 Laden with riches, at Trade's behest—
 Bounteous Trade, whose wine and corn
 Stock the garner and fill the horn ;
 Who gives us Luxury, Joy, and Pleasure,
 Stintless, sumless, out of measure—
 Thou art a rich and a mighty river,
 Rolling in ebb and flow for ever.

Doleful river, oh, doleful river,
 Pale on thy breast the moonbeams quiver,
 Through the city so drear and cold—
 City of sorrows hard to bear,
 Of guilt, injustice, and despair—
 City of miseries untold ;—

Thou hidest below, in thy treacherous waters,
The death-cold forms of Beauty's daughters ;
The corpses pale of the young and sad—
Of the old whom sorrow has goaded mad—
Mothers of babes that cannot know
The sires that left them to their woe—
Women forlorn, and men that run
The race of passion, and die undone ;
Thou takest them all to thy careless wave,
Thou givest them all a ready grave ;
Thou art a black and a doleful river,
Rolling in ebb and flow for ever.

In ebb and flow for ever and ever—
So rolls the world, thou murky river !
So rolls the tide, above and below :
Above, the rower impels his boat ;
Below, with the current the dead men float !—
The waves may smile in the sunny glow,
While above, in the glitter, and pomp, and glare,
The flags of the vessels flap the air ;
But below, in the silent under-tide,
The waters vomit the wretch that died.
Above, the sound of the music swells,
From the passing ship, from the city bells ;
From below there cometh a gurgling breath,
As the desperate diver yields to death :
Above and below the waters go,
Bearing their burden of Joy or Woe ;
Rolling along, thou mighty river,
In ebb and flow for ever and ever !

JOHN LITTLEJOHN.

JOHN LITTLEJOHN was stanch and strong,
Upright and downright, scorning wrong ;
He gave good weight, and paid his way,
He thought for himself, and he said his say.
Whenever a rascal strove to pass,
Instead of silver, money of brass,
He took his hammer, and said, with a frown,
" The coin is spurious, nail it down."

John Littlejohn was firm and true,
You could not cheat him in "two and two ;"
When foolish arguers, might and main,
Darken'd and twisted the clear and plain,
He saw through the mazes of their speech
The simple truth beyond their reach ;
And crushing their logic, said, with a frown,
" Your coin is spurious, nail it down."

John Littlejohn maintain'd the Right,
Through storm and shine, in the world's despite ;
When fools or quacks desired his vote,
Dosed him with arguments, learn'd by rote,

Or by coaxing, threats, or promise, tried
To gain his support to the wrongful side,
"Nay, nay," said John, with an angry frown,
"*Your coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

When told that kings had a right divine,
And that the people were herds of swine,
That the rich alone were fit to rule,
That the poor were unimproved by school,
That ceaseless toil was the proper fate
Of all but the wealthy and the great,
John shook his head, and swore, with a frown,
"*The coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

When told that events might justify
A false and crooked policy,
That a decent hope of future good
Might excuse departure from rectitude,
That a lie, if white, was a small offence,
To be forgiven by men of sense,
"Nay, nay," said John, with a sigh and frown,
"*The coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

When told from the pulpit or the press
That Heaven was a place of exclusiveness,
That none but those could enter there
Who knelt with the "orthodox" at prayer,
And held all virtues out of their pale
As idle works of no avail,
John's face grew dark, as he swore, with a frown,
"*The coin is spurious, nail it down.*"

Whenever the world our eyes would blind
With false pretences of such a kind,
With humbug, cant, and bigotry,
Or a specious, sham philosophy,
With wrong dress'd up in the guise of right,
And darkness passing itself for light,
Let us imitate John, and exclaim, with a frown,
"The coins are spurious, nail them down."



THE POOR MAN'S BIRD.

A YEAR ago I had a child,
A little daughter fair and mild ;
More precious than my life to me,
She sleeps beneath the churchyard tree.
Oh ! she was good as she was fair,
Her presence was like balmy air ;
She was a radiance in my room,
She was sunlight in my gloom.

She loved thee well, thou little bird,
Her voice and thine were ever heard ;
They roused me when the morning shone,
But now I hear thy voice alone.
She call'd me gently to her side,
Gave me her bird, and, smiling, died.
Thou wert her last bequest to me ;
I loved her fondly—I love thee.

'Tis true, I often think it hard,
Sweet lark, to keep thee here imbarr'd,
Whilst thou art singing all day long,
As if the fields inspired thy song,

As if the flowers, the woods, the streams,
Were present in thy waking dreams ;
But yet, how can I let thee fly?
What couldst thou do with liberty?

What couldst *thou* do?—Alas, for me!
What should *I* do if wanting thee,
Sole relic of my Lucy dear?
There needs no talk—thou’rt prisoner here.
But I will make thy durance sweet,
I’ll bring thee turf to cool thy feet ;
Fresh turf, with daisies tipp’d in pink,
And water from the well to drink.

I need thee. Were it not to choose,
Ere sunshine dry the morning dews,
Thy fresh green turf, I should not stray
Out to the fields the live-long day ;
I should be captive to the town,
And waste my life in alleys brown ;
Thy wants impel me to the sward,
And Nature’s face is my reward.

Sweet bird, thou wakenest by thy song
Bright memories and affections strong ;
At sight of thee I dream of flowers,
And running streams, and branching bowers ;
But most of her whose little face
Was luminous with love and grace ;
Thou art a link I may not break—
I love thee for my Lucy’s sake.

UNKNOWN ROMANCES.

I.

OFt have I wander'd when the first faint light
Of morning shone upon the steeple-vanes
Of sleeping London, through the silent night,
Musing on memories of joys and pains ;—
And looking down long vistas of dim lanes
And shadowy streets, one after other spread
In endless coil, have thought what hopes now dead
Once bloom'd in every house, what tearful rains
Women have wept, for husband, sire, or son ;
What love and sorrow ran their course in each,
And what great silent tragedies were done ;—
And wish'd the dumb and secret walls had speech,
That they might whisper to me, one by one,
The sad true lessons that their walls might teach.

II.

Close and forgetful witnesses, they hide,
In nuptial chamber, attic, or saloon,
Many a legend sad of desolate bride,
And mournful mother, blighted all too soon ;
Of strong men's agony, despair, and pride,
And mental glory darken'd ere its noon.

But let the legends perish in their place,
For well I know where'er these walls have seen
Humanity's upturn'd and heavenly face,
That there has virtue, there has courage been ;—
That e'en 'mid passions foul, and vices base,
Some ray of goodness interposed between.
Ye voiceless houses, ever as I gaze,
This moral flashes from your walls serenè.



THE FLOATING STRAW.

A THOUGHT IN THE PANIC, 1847.

THE wild waves are my nightly pillows,
Beneath me roll the Atlantic billows ;
And as I rest on my couch of brine,
I watch the eternal planets shine.
Ever I ride
On a harmless tide,
Fearing nought—enjoying all things—
Undisturb'd by great or small things.

Alas ! for the lordly vessel
That sails so gallantly !
The winds may dash it,
The storms may wash it,
The lightnings rend its tall masts three ;
But neither the wind, nor the rain, nor the sea,
Can injure me—can injure me !
The lightnings cannot strike me down,
Whirlwinds wreck, or whirlpools drown ;
And the ship to be lost ere the break of morn,
May pass o'er my head in saucy scorn ;

And when the Night unveils its face,
I may float, unharm'd, in my usual place,
And the ship may show to the pitying stars
No remnant but her broken spars.

Among the shells
In the ocean dells
The ships, the crews, and the captains lie ;
But the floating straw looks up to the sky.
And the humble and contented man,
Unknown to Fortune, escapes her ban,
And rides secure when breakers leap,
And mighty ships go down to the deep.

May pleasant breezes waft them home
That plough with their keels the driving foam !
Heaven be their hope, and Truth their law ;—
There needs no prayer for the floating straw !



A QUESTION ANSWERED.

WHAT to do to make thy fame
Live beyond thee in the tomb?
And thine honourable name
Shine, a star, through History's gloom?

Seize the Spirit of thy Time,
Take the measure of his height,
Look into his eyes sublime,
And imbue thee with their light.

Know his words e'er they are spoken,
And with utterance loud and clear,
Firm, persuasive, and unbroken,
Breathe them in the people's ear.

Think whate'er the spirit thinks,
Feel thyself, whate'er he feels,
Drink at fountains where he drinks,
And reveal what he reveals.

And whate'er thy medium be,
Canvas, stone, or printed sheet,
Fiction, or philosophy,
Or a ballad for the street ;

Or, perchance, with passion fraught,
Spoken words, like lightnings thrown,
Tell the people all thy thought,
And the world shall be thine own !



WHAT MIGHT BE DONE.

WHAT might be done if men were wise—
What glorious deeds, my suffering brother,
Would they unite,
In love and right,
And cease their scorn for one another?

Oppression's heart might be imbued
With kindling drops of loving-kindness,
And Knowledge pour,
From shore to shore,
Light on the eyes of mental blindness.

All slavery, warfare, lies, and wrongs,
All vice and crime might die together;
And wine and corn,
To each man born,
Be free as warmth in summer weather.

The meanest wretch that ever trod,
The deepest sunk in guilt and sorrow,
Might stand erect,
In self-respect,
And share the teeming world to-morrow

What might be done? *This* might be done,
And more than *this*, my suffering brother—
More than the tongue
Ever said or sung,
If men were wise and loved each other.



THE MOWERS.

AN ANTICIPATION OF THE CHOLERA, 1848.

DENSE on the stream the vapours lay,
Thick as wool on the cold highway ;
Spongy and dim, each lonely lamp
Shone o'er the streets so dull and damp ;
The moonbeam could not pierce the cloud
That swathed the city like a shroud.
There stood three Shapes on the bridge alone,
Three figures by the coping-stone ;
Gaunt, and tall, and undefined,
Spectres built of mist and wind ;
Changing ever in form and height,
But black and palpable to sight.

"This is a city fair to see,"
Whisper'd one of the fearful three ;
"A mighty tribute it pays to me.
Into its river, winding slow,
Thick and foul from shore to shore,
The vessels come, the vessels go,
And teeming lands their riches pour

It spreads beneath the murky sky
A wilderness of masonry ;
Huge, unshapely, overgrown,
Dingy brick and blacken'd stone.
Mammon is its chief and lord,
Monarch slavishly adored ;
Mammon sitting side by side
With Pomp, and Luxury, and Pride ;
Who calls his large dominion theirs,
Nor dream a portion is Despair's.

"Countless thousands bend to me
In rags and purple, in hovel and hall,
And pay the tax of Misery
With tears, and blood, and spoken gall.
Whenever they cry
For aid to die,
I give them courage to dare the worst,
And leave their ban on a world accursed.
I show them the river so black and deep,
They take the plunge, they sink to sleep ;
I show them poison, I show them rope,
They rush to death without a hope.
Poison, and rope, and pistol-ball,
Welcome either, welcome all !
I am the lord of the teeming town—
I mow them down, I mow them down !"

"Ay, thou art great, but greater I,"
The second spectre made reply ;

"Thou rulest with a frown austere,
Thy name is synonym of Fear.
But I, despotic and hard as thou,
Have a laughing lip, an open brow.
I build a temple in every lane,
I have a palace in every street ;
And the victims throng to the doors
 again,
And wallow like swine beneath my feet.
To me the strong man gives his health,
The wise man reason, the rich man
 wealth ;
Maids their virtue, youth its charms,
And mothers the children in their arms.
Thou art a slayer of mortal men—
Thou of the unit, I of the ten ;
Great thou art, but greater I,
To decimate humanity.
'Tis *I* am the lord of the teeming town—
I mow them down, I mow them down !"

"Vain boasters to exult at death,"
The third replied, "so feebly done ;
I ope my jaws, and with a breath
Slay thousands while you think of one.
All the blood that Cæsar spill'd,
All that Alexander drew,
All the hosts by 'glory' kill'd,
From Agincourt to Waterloo,
Compared with those whom I have slain,
Are but a river to the main.

"I brew disease in stagnant pools,
And wandering here, disporting there,
Favour'd much by knaves and fools,
I poison streams, I taint the air ;
I shake from my locks the spreading Pest,
I keep the Typhus at my behest ;
In filth and slime
I crawl, I climb ;—
I find the workman at his trade,
I blow on his lips, and down he lies ;
I look in the face of the ruddiest maid,
And straight the fire forsakes her eyes—
She droops, she sickens, and she dies ;
I stint the growth of babes new-born,
Or shear them off like standing corn ;
I rob the sunshine of its glow,
I poison all the winds that blow ;
Whenever they pass, they suck my breath,
And freight their wings with certain death.
'Tis *I* am the lord of the crowded town—
I mow them down, I mow them down !

"But great as we are, there cometh one
Greater than you—greater than I,
To aid the deeds that shall be done,
To end the work that we've begun,
And thin this thick humanity.
I see his footmarks east and west,
I hear his tread in the silence fall,
He shall not sleep, he shall not rest—
He comes to aid us one and all'

Were men as wise as men might be,
They would not work for you, for me,
For him that cometh over the sea ;
But they will not heed the warning voice.
The Cholera comes, rejoice ! rejoice !
*He shall be lord of the swarming town,
And mow them down, and mow them down !*"



SAID I TO MYSELF, SAID I.

I'm poor and quite unknown,
 I have neither fame nor rank ;
 My labour is all I own,
 I have no gold at the bank ;
 I'm one of the common crowd,
 Despised of the passers-by,
 Contemn'd of the rich and proud—
Said I to myself, said I.

I want, and I cannot obtain,
 The luxuries of the earth ;
 My raiment is scant and plain,
 And I live in the fear of dearth ;
 While others can laugh or sing,
 I have ever some cause to sigh ;
 I'm a weary wanderling—
Said I to myself, said I.

But is this grieving just ?
 Is it wise to fret and wail ?
 Is it right, thou speck of dust,
 Thine envy should prevail ?

Is it fitting thou shouldst close
Thy sight to the sunny sky,
And an utter dark suppose?
Said I to myself, said I.

If poor, thou hast thy health;
If humble, thou art strong;
And the lark, that knows not wealth,
Ever sings a happy song.
The flowers rejoice in the air,
And give thy needs the lie;—
Thou'rt a fool to foster care,
Said I to myself, said I.

If the wants of thy pride be great,
The needs of thy health are small,
And the world is the man's estate
Who can wisely enjoy it all.
For him is the landscape spread,
For him do the breezes ply,
For him is the day-beam shed—
Said I to myself, said I.

For him are the oceans roll'd,
For him do the rivers run,
For him doth the year unfold
Her bounties to the sun;
For him, if his heart be pure,
Shall common things supply
All pleasures that endure—
Said I to myself, said I.

For him each blade of grass
Waves pleasure as it grows ;
For him, as the light clouds pass,
A spirit of beauty flows ;
For him, as the streamlets leap,
Or the winds on the tree-tops sigh,
Comes a music sweet and deep—
Said I to myself, said I.

Nor of earth are his joys alone,
How mean soever his state—
On him from the starry zone
His ministering angels wait ;
With him in voiceless thought
They hold communion high ;
By them are his fancies fraught—
Said I to myself, said I.

I will mould my life afresh,
I will circumscribe desire ;
Farewell to ye, griefs of flesh !
And let my soul aspire.
I will make my wishes few,
That my joys may multiply ;
Adieu, false wants, adieu !—
Said I to myself, said I.

AN APPEAL TO PARIS.

1847.

BEAUTIFUL Paris! morning star of nations!
The Lucifer of cities, lifting high
The beacon blaze of young democracy!
Medina and Gomorrha both in one—
Medina of a high and holy creed
To be developed in a coming time!
Gomorrha, rampant with all vice and guilt—
Luxurious, godless, grovelling, soaring Paris,
Laden with intellect, and yet not wise—
Metropolis of satire and lampoon,
Of wit, of elegance, of mirth, of song,
And fearful tragedies done day by day,
Which put our hair on end in the open streets—
The busy hive of awful memories,
The potent arbiter of popular will,
The great electric centre whence the shocks
Of pulsing freedom vibrate through the world—
Beautiful Paris! sacred to our hearts,
With all thy folly, all thy wickedness—
If but for Bailly, Vergniaud, Gensonné,
And noblest Roland, she of Roman soul,
And the great patriots and friends of man
Who went to death for holy liberty—

Lift up thy voice, O Paris! once again,
And speak the thought that labours in thy breast ;
Shake off thy gauds and tinsels—be thyself ;
Cease thy lewd jests, and heartless revelries,
Thy adoration of all worthless things,
Thy scorn, thy sarcasm, and thy unbelief ;
And in the conflict and the march of men
Do justice to thy nature, and complete
The glorious work, so gloriously begun
By the great souls of pregnant eighty-nine.
Come forth, oh, Paris! freed from vice and stain,
Like a young warrior dallying too long
With loving women, wasting precious hours
In base delights and enervating sloth ;
Who, when he shakes them off, puts back his hair
From his broad brow, and places on his head
The plumèd helmet—throws his velvets off,
And swathes his vigorous limbs in glancing steel,
To lead true hearts to struggle for mankind.
Or if no more, Soldier of Liberty!
Thou 'lt lead the nations—stand upon the hill,
And, like a prophet, preach a holy creed
Of freedom, progress, peace, and happiness ;
And all the world shall listen to thy voice,
And Tyranny, hyæna big with young,
Dreading the sound, shall farrow in affright,
And drop, still-born, her sanguinary cubs,
And many a bloody feud be spared mankind.
Poland again, with desperate grasp, shall seizo
The neck of her enslaver, and extort
Full justice from his terror ; Hungary,
Ermined and crown'd, shall sit in her own seat

In peaceful state and sober majesty ;
And Italy, unloosening her bonds
By her strong will, shall be at last the home
Of broadly based and virtuous liberty,
And in her bosom nurture evermore,
Not the fierce virtues of her Roman youth,
But the calm blessings of her later time—
Science, and art, and civilizing trade,
Divine philosophy, diviner song,
And true religion reconciled with man.

Speak out, O Paris ! purify thyself
By noble thoughts, and deeds will follow them.
The world has need of thee. Humanity
Droops for thy dalliance with degraded things,
Alien, and most unworthy of the soul
That sleeps within thee. Rouse thyself, O Paris !
The time expects thee. Pyrenees, and Alps,
And Appenines, and snow-clad Balkans, wait,
With all their echoes, to repeat the words
Which thou *must* utter ! Thou hast slumber'd long—
Long dallied. Speak ! The world will answer thee !



THOUGHTS.

TRUE thoughts, your days of grief are done,
 No more shall scorn or hate impede you ;—
 Born in the light, where'er the sun
 Shines on mankind, mankind shall heed you.
 So grow, ye grains of mustard-seed,
 Grow each into a tree ;
 And kindle, sparks, to beal-fires bright,
 That all the earth may see ;
 And spread, ye thoughts of Truth and Right,
 O'er all humanity !

Time *was*, when thoughts bore tears and death
 To the wise few that dared to raise them ;
 Time *is*, when thoughts are living breath,
 And the world's throbbing heart obeys them.
 So grow, ye grains of mustard-seed,
 Grow each into a tree ;
 And kindle, sparks, to beal-fires bright,
 That all the earth may see ;
 And spread, ye workers for the Right,
 Onwards eternally !

CLEON AND I.

CLEON hath a million acres,
Ne'er a one have I;
Cleon dwelleth in a palace,
In a cottage I;
Cleon hath a dozen fortunes,
Not a penny I:
Yet the poorer of the twain is
Cleon, and not I.

Cleon, true, possesseth acres,
But the landscape I;
Half the charms to me it yieldeth
Money cannot buy;
Cleon harbours sloth and dulness,
Freshening vigour I;
He in velvet, I in fustian—
Richer man am I.

Cleon is a slave to grandeur,
Free as thought am I;
Cleon fees a score of doctors,
Need of none have I;

Wealth-surrounded, care-environd,
Cleon fears to die ;
Death may come, he'll find me ready ;—
Happier man am I.

Cleon sees no charms in Nature,
In a daisy I ;
Cleon hears no anthems singing
In the sea and sky ;
Nature sings to me for ever,
Earnest listener I ;
State for state, with all attendants,
Who would change ? Not I.



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to see,—an actual glimpse
of spectres and of imps
him on threshold of the grave.
give it in the words he gave :—

may think that I am crazed,
saw, that did I see.
thick, my brain is sick,
eyes saw lucidly.
joists and through the stones
as through a glass :
dungeon damp and cold,
motley people pass.
rapid and strong,
fro the living stream ;
t I saw a sight—
it was a dream.

sepulchre's bell will toll
morrow for my soul ;
as, not much better than I,
round to see me die ;
will bless their happy fate
fell from their high estate,
deed as I have done ;
the rise to the set of sun,
their neighbours all their days,
gold in slimy ways.
I feels strong, and my sight grows clear,
th-hour approaches near,
presence I will tell
ath, as it befell.

“The snow lies thick on the house-tops cold,
Shrill and keen the March winds blow ;
The rank grass of the churchyard mould
Is cover'd o'er with drifted snow ;
The graves in old St. Sepulchre's yard
Were white last night when I look'd forth,
And the sharp clear stars seem'd to dance in the sky,
Rock'd by the fierce winds of the north.

“The houses dull seem'd numb with frost,
The streets seem'd wider than of yore,
And the straggling passengers trod, like ghosts,
Silently on the pathway frore ;
When I look'd through that churchyard rail,
And thought of the bell that should ring my doom,
And saw three women, sad and pale,
Sitting together on a tomb.

“A fearful sight it was to see,
As up they rose and look'd at me.
Sunken were their cheeks and eyes ;
Blue-cold were their feet, and bare ;
Lean and yellow were their hands ;
Long and scanty was their hair ;
And round their necks I saw the ropes
Deftly knotted, tightly drawn ;
And knew they were not things of earth,
Or creatures that could face the dawn.

“Seen dimly in the uncertain light,
They multiplied upon my sight ;
And things like men and women sprung-
Shapes of those who had been hung—

From the rank and clammy ground.
I counted them—I knew them all,
Each with its rope around its neck,
Marshall'd by the churchyard wall.
The stiff policeman, passing along,
Saw them not, nor made delay ;
A reeling bacchanal, shouting a song,
Look'd at the clock and went his way ;
A troop of girls with painted cheeks,
Laughing and yelling in drunken glee,
Pass'd like a gust, and never look'd
At the sight so palpable to me.
I saw them—heard them—felt their breath
Musty and raw and damp as death !

“ ‘These women three, these fearful shapes,
Look'd at me through Newgate stone,
And raised their fingers, skinny and lank,
Whispering low in under-tone :—
'His hour draws near,—he's one of us,—
His gibbet is built,—his noose is tied ;
They have put his name on the coffin-lid :
The law of blood shall be satisfied.
He shall rest with us, and his name shall be
A by-word and a mockery.' ”

“ ‘I whisper'd to one, 'What hast thou done ?'
She answer'd, whispering, and I heard—
Although a chime rang at the time—
Every sentence, every word,
Clear above the pealing bells :—
'I was mad, and slew my child ;

Better than life, God knows, I loved it ;
But pain and hunger drove me wild,
Scorn and hunger, and grief and care ;
And I slew it in my despair.
And for this deed they raised the gibbet ;
For this deed the noose they tied ;
And I hung and swung in the sight of men,
And the law of blood was satisfied.'

"I said to the second, 'What didst thou ?'
Her keen eyes flash'd unearthly shine.
'I married a youth when I was young,
And thought all happiness was mine ;
But they stole him from me to fight the French ;
And I was left in the world alone,
To beg or steal, to live or die,
Robb'd of my stay, my all, my own.
England stole my lord from me,—
I stole a ribbon, was caught and tried ;
And I hung and swung in the sight of men,
And the law of blood was satisfied.'

"I said to the third, 'What crime was thine ?'
'Crime !' she answer'd, in accents meek,
'The babe that sucks at its mother's breast,
And smiles with its little dimpled cheek,
Is not more innocent than I.
But truth was feeble,—error was strong ;
And guiltless of a deed of shame,
Men's justice did me cruel wrong.

They would not hear my truthful words :
They thought me fill'd with stubborn pride ;
And I hung arfd swung in the sight of men,
And the law of blood was satisfied.'

"Then one and all, by that churchyard wall,
Raised their skinny hands at me ;
Their voices mingling like the sound
Of rustling leaves in a withering tree :
'His hour has come, he's one of us ;
His gibbet is built, his noose is tied ;
His knell shall ring, and his corpse shall swing,
And the law of blood shall be satisfied.'

"They vanish'd ! I saw them, one by one,
With their bare blue feet on the drifted snow
Sink like a thaw, when the sun is up,
To their wormy solitudes below.
Though you may deem this was a dream,
My facts are tangible facts to me ;
For the sight glows clear as death draws near
And looks into futurity.'"

THE LITTLE MOLES.

WHEN grasping tyranny offends,
Or angry bigots frown ;
When rulers plot, for selfish ends,
To keep the nations down ;
When statesmen form unholy league
To drive the world to war ;
When knaves in palaces intrigue
For ribbons or a star—
We raise our heads, survey their deeds,
And cheerily reply,
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

When canting hypocrites combine
To curb a free man's thought,
And hold all doctrine undivine
That holds their canting nought ;
When round their narrow pale they plod,
And scornfully assume
That all without are cursed of God,
And justify the doom,—
We think of God's eternal love,
And strong in hope reply,
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

When greedy authors wield the pen
To please the vulgar town,
Depict great thieves as injured men
And heroes of renown ;
Pander to prejudice unclean,
Apologize for crime,
And daub the vices of the mean
With flattery like slime ;
For MILTON's craft, for SHAKSPERE's tongue
We blush, but yet reply—
*Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.*

When smug philosophers survey
The various climes of earth,
And mourn, poor sagelings of a day !
Its too prolific birth ;
And prove by figure, rule, and plan,
The large fair world too small
•To feed the multitudes of man
That flourish on its ball ;
We view the vineyards on the hills,
Or corn-fields waving high ;—
*Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.*

When men complain of humankind
In misanthropic mood,
And thinking evil things, grow blind
To presence of the good ;

When, wall'd in prejudices strong,
They urge that evermore
The world is fated to go wrong
For going wrong before,—
We feel the truths they cannot feel,
And smile as we reply,
*Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.*



LET US ALONE.

MANY—and yet our fate is one,
 And little after all we crave—
 Enjoyment of the common sun,
 Fair passage to the common grave;
 Our bread and fire, our plain attire,
 The free possession of our own.
 Rulers be wise! and kings and czars,
Let us alone—let us alone.

We have a faith, we have a law;
 A faith in God, a hope in man;
 And own, with reverence and awe,
 Love universal as His plan.
 To Charity we bow the knee,
 The earth's refiner and our own.
 Bigots, and fighters about words,
Let us alone—let us alone.

The world is the abode of men,
 And not of demons stark and blind;
 And Eden's self might bloom again,
 If men did justice to mankind.

We want no more of Nature's store,
Than Nature meant to be our own.
Masters and gerents of the earth,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Your meddling brought us grief and care,
And added misery day by day;
We're not so foolish as we were,
Nor fashion'd of such ductile clay;
Your petty jars, your wicked wars,
Have lost their charm, the gilding's gone :
Victorious marshals, vaulting kings,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Though dwellers in a little isle,
We bear no hate to other lands,
And think that Peace on earth might smile
If we and others join'd our hands.
In Reason's spite why should we fight?
We'll war no more—we're wiser grown.
Quibblers and stirrers up of hate,
Let us alone—let us alone.

White man or black, to us alike;
Foemen of no men we will live,
We will not lift our hands to strike,
Or evil for advantage give.
Our hands are free to earn their fee,
Our tongues to let the truth be known ;
So despots, knaves, and foes of right,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Great are our destinies : our task,
Long since begun, shall never end
While suffering has a boon to ask,
Or truth needs spokesmen to defend ;
While vice or crime pollute the time,
While nations bleed, or patriots groan.
Rulers be wise ! and meddling fools,
Let us alone—let us alone.



ETERNAL JUSTICE.

THE man is thought a knave, or fool,
Or bigot, plotting crime,
Who, for the advancement of his kind,
Is wiser than his time.
For him the hemlock shall distil ;
For him the axe be bared ;
For him the gibbet shall be built ;
For him the stake prepared.
Him shall the scorn and wrath of men
Pursue with deadly aim ;
And malice, envy, spite, and lies,
Shall desecrate his name.
But Truth shall conquer at the last,
For round and round we run ;
And ever the Right comes uppermost,
And ever is Justice done.

Pace through thy cell, old Socrates,
Cheerily to and fro ;

Trust to the impulse of thy soul,
And let the poison flow.
They may shatter to earth the lamp of clay
That holds a light divine,
But they cannot quench the fire of thought
By any such deadly wine.
They cannot blot thy spoken words
From the memory of man
By all the poison ever was brew'd
Since time its course began.
To-day abhorr'd, to-morrow adored,
So round and round we run ;
And ever the Truth comes uppermost,
And ever is Justice done.

Plod in thy cave grey anchorite ;
Be wiser than thy peers ;
Augment the range of human power,
And trust to coming years.
They may call thee wizard, and monk accursed,
And load thee with dispraise ;
Thou wert born five hundred years too soon
For the comfort of thy days ;
But not too soon for humankind.
Time hath reward in store ;
And the demons of our sires become
The saints that we adore.
The blind can see, the slave is lord,
So round and round we run ;
And ever the wrong is proved to be wrong,
And ever is Justice done.

Keep, Galileo, to thy thought,
And nerve thy soul to bear;
They may gloat o'er the senseless words they
wring
From the pangs of thy despair;
They may veil their eyes, but they cannot hide
The sun's meridian glow;
The heel of a priest may tread thee down,
And a tyrant work thee woe;
But never a truth has been destroy'd;
They may curse it and call it crime;
Pervert and betray, or slander and slay,
Its teachers for a time;
But the sunshine aye shall light the sky,
As round and round we run;
And the Truth shall ever come uppermost,
And Justice shall be done.

And live there now such men as these—
With thoughts like the great of old?
Many have died in their misery,
And left their thought untold;
And many live, and are rank'd as mad,
And placed in the cold world's ban,
For sending their bright far-seeing souls
Three centuries in the van.
They toil in penury and grief,
Unknown, if not malign'd;
Forlorn, forlorn, hearing the scorn
Of the meanest of mankind!

But yet the world goes round and round,
And the genial seasons run ;
And ever the Truth comes uppermost,
And ever is Justice done.

THE END.

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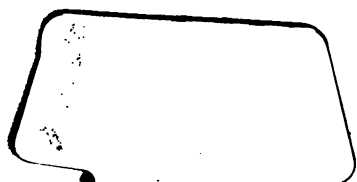
"Fantastic beauty—such as lurks
In some wild Poet when he works
Without a conscience and an aim"—

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